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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Army Engineers Help Develop Iraq's Port Capacity

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BASRAH, Iraq -- The Port of Umm Qsar directly influences the economy of Iraq and the U.S Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) works to help improve the services of the Iraqi berths to handle the cargo flowing in or out of the country.

Natalie J. Sudman, a USACE Construction Representative with the Gulf Region South (GRS) District, oversees the \$13.8 million project helping to expand the capacity of the port located south of the city of Basrah near the Kuwait border.

It is Iraq's only port, which helps to export and import commercial goods and services for the people, and it's security and safety is a priority says Sudman.

"To provide port security and harbor defense at the port of Umm Qasr, we [USACE] installed a 9.7 kilometer chain link security fence around the perimeter of Umm Qasr North Port and South Port, built 19 observation posts, two points of entry, and interior and exterior truck staging areas," she said.

A key benefit of providing port security and harbor defense is to give the Iraqi armed forces the facilities they need to protect their economy and promote growth.

"This is a major step towards attaining the international ship and port facility security code (ISPS) certification. This certification will lower insurance rates and make the Umm Qasr Port a more attractive port of call for foreign shippers," Sudman said.

"The ISPS certification will effectively increase the foreign trade with Iraq and increase employment rate in the local area jobs explained.

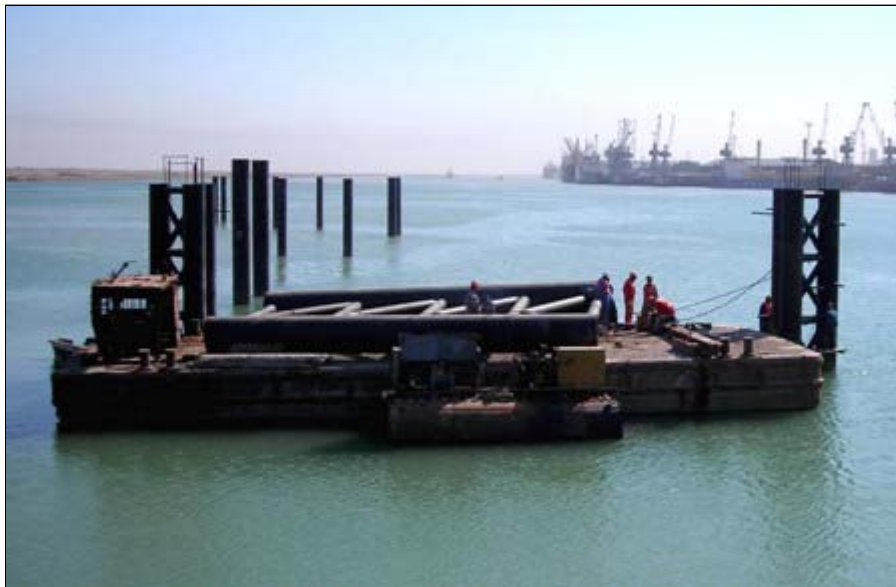
Sudman says the project is important to Iraq's security and supports the major task of rebuilding the nation's infrastructure by materials.

Another task that the USACE worked this past year was a project to provide reliable power for the two Nelcon cranes and the



Iraqi metal tradesmen work on the steel framework for the pier of the new roll-off berth at the Port of Umm Qasr. [USACE PHOTO BY A. AL. BAHRANI]

the port.



The Port of Umm Qasr will have a second roll-on and roll-off cargo pier. Here Iraqi construction workers prepare a metal pier pylon for installation at the end of the RO/RO berth area.
[USACE PHOTO by A. Al. Bahrani]

Talib Abd-Beneen, a GRS quality assurance engineer, added, "The project will expand cargo and passenger use of the port, critical to the Iraqi economy, as the nation rejoins the global markets. These safe, modern and reliable facilities will serve to boost and ensure the efficient flow of goods in and out Iraq."

"With the addition of the two crane project will increase imports and exports, reduces the time of loading and unloading," said Tom Eidson, a GRS project engineer.

Eidson described how USACE superintends the connection of each crane to a 1.9 mill generator and the two kiosk-type transfer cranes.

To increase the commercial trade throughput of the port and improve capacity, Army engineers are constructing a new second roll-on and roll-off berth facility.

According to Eidson, whose experience in the Corps exceeds 25 years, "The new roll-on and roll-off berth will be about twice the size of the existing one, and it will increase the commercial capability at the port."

"Currently a large percentage of vessels waiting at the port wait in line for the opportunity to use the berth," he said, "The new facility will significantly increase the amount of passengers and cargo throughput through the port."

Eidson said that the new berth is strategically located in the center of the existing port facility, which provides ships more room to maneuver and transfer cargo.

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